



THANK YOU!

We wish to thank all the individuals and organizations who assisted us in developing the Nisqually NWR Comprehensive Conservation Plan. Hundreds of people have participated over the last eight years to make this plan a reality. **THANK YOU!**

BECOME A FRIEND OF THE REFUGE

Carrying out the plan will require citizen support. We will need volunteers to help with new and expanded programs in environmental education, habitat restoration, and wildlife and habitat monitoring.

Friends and volunteers will:

- Provide support and advocacy for the Refuge;
- Assist with Refuge projects and programs;
- Build community understanding of the Refuge as a place for wildlife first.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or a Friend of Nisqually NWR, please contact Jean Takekawa, Refuge Manager, at (360) 753-9467.



American wigeon, photo by Steve Emmons

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge

December 2004 - Planning Update #8



Saltmarsh habitat at Nisqually NWR, photo by USFWS

The Record of Decision Has Been Signed!

On November 1, 2004 the Regional Director, David Allen signed the Record of Decision (ROD) adopting Alternative D, the Preferred Alternative described in the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (Final CCP/EIS). Signing the ROD means that implementation of the adopted alternative may begin.

Alternative D was selected from among four alternatives to be the CCP for Nisqually NWR. The Plan will provide management guidance for refuge resources and public use activities during the next 15 years. This alternative provides the largest potential Refuge boundary expansion (3,479-acre addition). It will also maximize estuarine restoration, while improving freshwater wetland and riparian habitats on the Refuge. The

environmental education program will be improved and expanded. The trail system will greatly change under this alternative. A small portion of Refuge lands will be opened to waterfowl hunting, 7 days per week, with no changes to hunting on WDFW lands. Wildlife sanctuary will be improved through area closures and boat speed limits.

The Final CCP/EIS and ROD are available at Nisqually NWR. The Final CCP/EIS can also be viewed at the following libraries: Timberland Community Library in Olympia; Tacoma Public Library; University of Washington's Suzallo Library in Seattle; William J. Reed Library in Shelton; and The Evergreen State College Library in Olympia. The Final CCP/EIS and ROD can be downloaded online at:

<http://pacific.fws.gov/planning>.

What Will Get Implemented First?

Ongoing habitat restoration projects will continue. Refuge staff and the Washington Conservation Corps are widening riparian habitat by planting native trees and shrubs along freshwater sloughs. With the help of over 700 students and Refuge volunteers, the Refuge will continue upland forest restoration of the 100-acre West Bluff parcel by planting Douglas-fir seedlings and controlling invasive Scotch broom. Freshwater wetland restoration efforts will continue in selected areas. Riparian, forest, and freshwater wetland restoration projects will gradually be expanded as suitable properties are acquired on a willing seller basis within the new approved Refuge boundary.

Estuarine restoration of the Nisqually delta will take several years. Refuge

staff will work closely with partners to begin developing site specific designs to be used to obtain the necessary permits for the restoration activities identified in the CCP. It is expected that this process will take approximately 2-3 years, so no changes to the dike trails will occur until after permits have been obtained and restoration begins.

Refuge staff will also meet with agencies, the Nisqually Indian Tribe, and various researchers to develop and implement specific research and monitoring projects to be used to assess restoration efforts. A wildlife monitoring plan will be developed, focusing on key species. Landbird, waterfowl, and a variety of other bird monitoring has already been initiated. A baseline fish monitoring study has been initiated in

cooperation with the Nisqually Indian Tribe and Ducks Unlimited.

Refuge staff will begin development of several step-down plans that are necessary to fully implement the CCP, including a Waterfowl Hunt Plan, Environmental Education Plan, and an Integrated Pest Management Plan. Step-down plans provide details and implementation schedules for meeting goals and objectives identified in the CCP. As needed, Refuge specific regulations will be published in the Federal Register and implemented on the ground.

For More Information

Questions or concerns regarding the Final CCP/EIS or ROD may be directed to: Jean Takekawa, Refuge Manager, phone (360) 753-9467 or fax (360) 534-9302.



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Address correction requested